

**Testimony in Support of
H.B. 6883, An Act Concerning Students with Developmental Disabilities**

Lisa Hammersley, Executive Director
School and State Finance Project

Chairmen McCrory and Currey, Ranking Members Berthel and McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H.B. 6883, An Act Concerning Students with Developmental Disabilities. The bill before you would help protect the education rights of students requiring special education services and better serve students with developmental disabilities and their families.

We support the bill's provisions to ease the transition process for students and families, increase transparency around complaints and hearings, and improve accountability so every student is getting the special education services they need and are entitled to. By codifying that students are able to receive special education services until age 22, creating a mechanism to ensure all state agencies involved in a student's transition to adulthood work together to provide strong transition services, and establishing an Office of Transition Services, this bill would better prepare and assist families of students with developmental disabilities and help ensure students have a smooth and successful transition into adulthood.

Additionally, we strongly support Section 13 of the bill, which would require interpreters be automatically provided by districts for non-English speaking parents and require that all relevant documents be translated into the parent/guardian's primary language. Parents/guardians play a critical role in determining special education services and programs for their student, and are required members, according to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, of their student's IEP or PPT team. Section 13 is a key provision of the proposed bill that reflects this important role of parents/guardians, protects the rights of students and families, and helps create a more equitable educational experience for all children.

Adopting H.B. 6883 would benefit Connecticut, its students, and its families. As an organization committed to educational equity, we urge the Committee to support this importance piece of legislation and the help strengthen the education and services provided to students with developmental disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 6883, and please feel free to contact me anytime should you have questions or would like to discuss this issue more.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hammersley
Executive Director
School and State Finance Project
lisa.hammersley@schoolstatefinance.org

About the School and State Finance Project

The School and State Finance Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit policy organization that works collaboratively with policymakers, communities, and other key stakeholders to develop data-driven solutions that ensure all public school students receive equitable education funding that supports their learning needs.